

Message Text

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66/16

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 USIA-06 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 OMB-01 AID-05 CU-02

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O R 170419Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8393

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 998

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TO TEXTS NBRD PARA SIX)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJECT: RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

REF: SEOUL 997

HURWITZ-O'DONOHUE TELECON OF FEB 16

1. AS OF MORNING OF FEB 17, ROKG HAS RELEASED 146
PRISONERS HELD UNDER EMERGENCY MEASURES NOS. 1 AND
4. ADDITIONAL RELEASES EXPECTED IMMINENTLY.

2. AMONG THOSE RELEASED THUS FAR ARE YONSEI UNIVERSITY
PROFESSOR KIM TONG-KIL, POET KIM CHI-HA AND
PASTOR PAK HYONG-KYU. WE HAVE
HEARD FROM CATHOLIC SOURCES THAT BISHOP CHI WILL BE
RELEASED EVENING OF FEB 17. TWO JAPANESE STUDENTS ALSO
EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED DURING COURSE OF DAY.

3. WHILE WELCOMING RELEASES, OPPOSITION NDP SPOKESMAN
SAID THEY WERE OVERDUE. HE CALLED ON GOVT TO GRANT
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FULL PARDON TO THOSE RELEASED INSTEAD OF MERELY

SUSPENDING SENTENCES.

4. SOME OF THOSE RELEASED HAVE ALREADY MADE STATEMENTS TO PRESS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF ROKG AND VOWING CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN OPPOSITION MOVEMENT. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, KIM CHI-HA SAID THAT RELEASE, COMING AFTER CRUEL TREATMENT IN PRISON, WAS A "FARCE". HE SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE FURTHER DISCLOSURES ABOUT SUCH TREATMENT. KIM TONG-KIL SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY AND WOULD BE "READY TO RETURN TO PRISON." TONG A RADIO FEB 17 CARRYING DETAILED REPORTS OF TORTURES SUFFERED BY SOME OF RELEASED STUDENTS.

5. EMBASSY HAS NOT YET BEEN ASKED BY ANY NEWSMEN FOR ITS REACTION TO RELEASES. IF QUESTION IS RAISED, WE INTEND TO RESPOND BY SAYING THAT WE NATURALLY WELCOME THIS STEP WHICH HAS BEEN WIDELY APPROVED BY THE KOREAN PUBLIC AND PRESS.

6. TO THE EXTENT THAT FOREIGN APPROBATION OF RELEASES MAY ENCOURAGE FURTHER CONCILIATORY STEPS, WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT CONSIDER ARRANGING TO HAVE ISSUE COME UP AT TUESDAY PRESS BRIEFING SO THAT RESPONSE SIMILAR TO ONE ABOVE CAN BE MADE.
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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 17 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: WorrelSW
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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05 JUL 2006

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TAGS: PINT, KS, (CHI HAK-SON, DANIEL), (KIM TONG-KIL), (KIM CHI-HA), (PAK HYONG-KYU)
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